



UPLEB-WRITERS' COMB

2023

Literary

Folio

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UPLB Writers' Club  
2023 Literary Folio

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Irnst Asperga

Pagsasa-ayos Nina:  
Jake Gando  
Felise Calza  
Rodelyn Cortez  
Irnst Asperga

Pamamahalang Pang-Literatura Ni:  
Martha Medina

Suhestiyong Konsepto at Paunang Salita ni:  
Ysa Mangulabnan

Suhestiyong Pamagat ni:  
Felise Calza

Mga Akda Nina:  
Clare Garana  
Irnst Asperga  
Rodelyn Cortez  
Zeril Manaois  
Jorge Malantic  
Julia Giere  
Zaian Perez  
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Francene Gahoy  
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For more information, reach out to:

#### UPLB WRITERS' CLUB

Email: [writersclubuplb@up.edu.ph](mailto:writersclubuplb@up.edu.ph)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/uplbwritersclub](https://facebook.com/uplbwritersclub)  
Instagram: [@uplbwritersclub](https://instagram.com/uplbwritersclub)  
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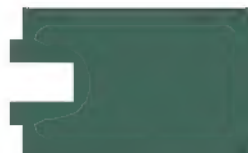
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*30dies*

Letter of Notice



# pre·face

/ˈprefəs/

Ang katawan ay ang pangunahing saksi sa ating pagiging tao.

Hindi lamang isang pisikal na bagay ang katawan, kundi isang konsepto na nakatali sa pamumuhay. Ito ang tanging nagbibigay daan sa atin na kumilos, mag-isip, at makiramdam. Kamalayan, pighati, alaala, pagdurusa – lahat ng mga karanasang ito ay nakapaloob sa at binibigyang-buhay ng ating mga katawan.

Sa panahong pre-kolonyal, ang katawan ay ang simbolo ng kapangyarihan at kabanalan. Pagbibihis ng sarili sa alahas na gawa sa pilak at ginto, pagpapaitim ng ngipin, at ang pagpapatatu ng mga tagumpay sa laban ay ilang halimbawa lamang sa kung paano kinakatawan ang diwa ng mga Pilipino sa kanilang pisikal na kabuuan. Bukod sa pampaganda ang mga alterasyong panlabas na ito, sagisag rin ito ng kanilang pagkatao.

Noong kinolonisa ang Pilipinas, pinatago sa mga Pilipino ang banal na pagkatao nito. Ang magmukhang “indio” at ang pagiging Pilipino ay kahihiyan at napilitan ang mga Pilipino na tumulad sa larawan ng mananakop: nakadamit, sibilisado; ang imahe ng lubos na kagandahan. Binaluktot ang tingin nila sa sarili nilang katawan, kultura at pagkakakilanlan. Pati ang mismong kapuluan at mga likas na kayamanan ng Pilipinas – ang “katawan” ng bansa – ay ipinasuko at patuloy na pinagsasamantalahan hanggang ngayon. Gayunman, sa kasalukuyang panahon, sinusubukan natin angkinin muli ang mga ito.

Binibigyan-diin sa kontemporaryong ideolohiyang kritikal ang pisikalidad ng mga bagay-bagay. Dito nakabatay ang pambansang kilusan para sa malaya at demokratikong lipunan: ang prinsipyong lahat ng bagay ay nakaugat sa materyal na kondisyon, tulad ng nasabing likas na yaman, mga hilaw na materyales, mga makinarya, at lahat ng klaseng materya na matatagpuan sa sansinukob. Kasama sa pag-unawa ng materyal na mundo ay ang pagkilala, bilang tao, ng sarili nating katawan kung saan nagmumula ang ahensiya na makiramay sa sakit, tuwa, hirap, at tagumpay ng mamamayan; at sa gitna ng kaguluhan at korapsyon, patuloy na ipaglaban ang kapakanan ng kapwa tao.

Napili ang temang “katawan” dahil sa lawak ng maaaring maging interpretasyon ng salita. Pwedeng laru-laruin ang konsepto at siguradong lahat ng tao ay mayroong karanasan na may kaugnayan sa katawan. Nagsasalaysay ng konsepto ng alaala, halimbawa, ang “dead / vessel” ni ZMB; ang trauma, sa “Tanikala” ni letraretrato; nasyonalismo, sa “Mga Pahinumdum san Búlan” ni Libulan; at krisis, sa “Draft #28” ni C.H. Isang sulyap lamang ang mga akda dito sa kung ano-ano ang mga damdamin at gunita na kinakabit ng mga Pilipino sa katawan.

Hindi lamang pisikal na representasyon ng ating sarili bilang indibidwal ang katawan, kundi isang sisidlan ng kolektibong alaala ng sangkatauhan. Ang pagkilala nito ay ang unang hakbang sa tunay na pagkilala ng ating sarili.

sa demo k rati kong  
re pub lika ng  
nasa tao katawan kinatawan  
ang kapangyarihan

hindi sa dikta ng  
ari pagma may-ari hari ha ri an

kaya ang dikta do r na  
pa paslang kawatan katawan ng

ay isang mang a agaw mag na nakaw  
hindi protektor ng kapangyarihan ng bayan

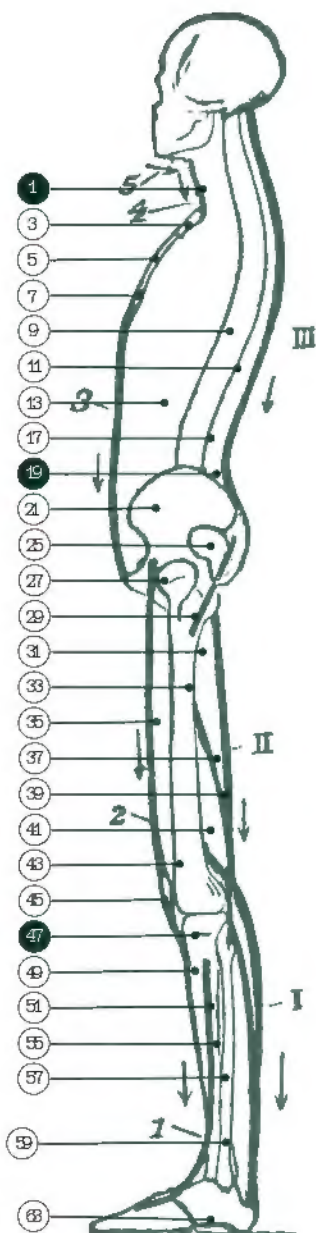


# laman

pangngalan: bagay na nakapaloob  
katawang-lupa  
bahagi  
karne

- birth of a body* Rods  
*divining design* Ze  
*31 Tips on Being Beautiful* Mallory Lain  
*bers* SUMAN  
*bodies: heavenly earthly* Zaian  
*Mga Pabinumdum san Bulan* Libulan  
*my friend, the polluted* GALENE  
*life of a body* Ronron  
*tanikala* LETRARETRATO  
*Growing Pains* AGNI RIVERA  
*Story of My Life - Walang Direction* ELI  
*What Keeps Me Up at Night* TULDOK-KUWIT  
*Kulay* POPOY  
*kunyare nasa kabilang table siya* ELBITANYO  
*draft(28).docx* c.h.  
*Siklo* POPOY  
*they shape* Knightro  
*Pabalat na Pabula* LEO  
*passage of time* MIRASOL  
*death of a body* Raven  
*deseccrated thy body was* p.maryosep  
*bizarre* HARMONY  
*dead/vessel* ZMB  
*Gabi* Wine Rivas  
*Puno't dulo* KALIEN CALMA  
*Hinagpis* NOA  
*Gulong* Clarity Fantastica

ni Fels Bonifacio







# *birth of a body*

mula sa sinulat ni Rods

Para sa isang sanggol na sinanay sa kadiliman

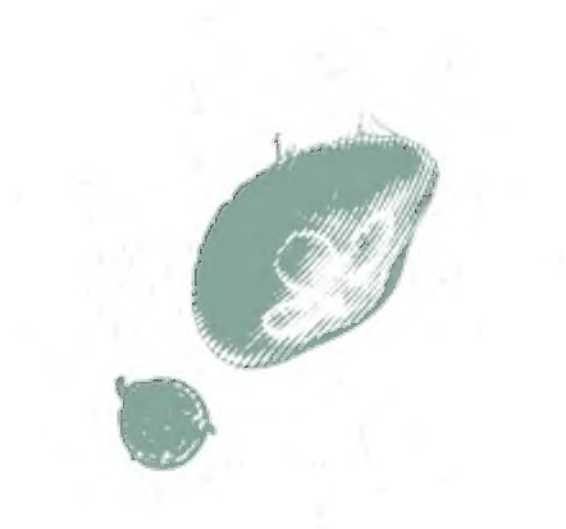
Pagbukas ng mata, liwanag ang unang nakilala.

Simbolo ng buhay at pagasa

Ngunit sa patuloy na pagkasanay, katotohana'y nakita

Mundo'y pinahaharian ng kadilimang hindi pamilyar

Ito ba talaga ang buhay? tanong sa kaisipan.



# *divining design*

ZE

quite frankly, i don't want to be anything.  
be made inhumane, writhing,  
crying for relief  
altogether pierced by grief

is it by design?  
cosmic indifference made divine  
or perhaps quantum uncertainty?  
fizzing, mingling inadvertently

and then flesh rendered  
next came body, centered  
then came sensations  
next came self, realizations.

what next? quite frankly,

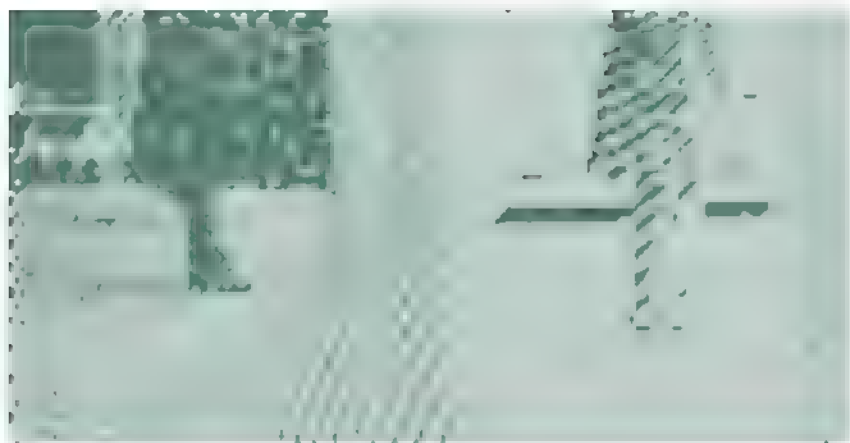
i don't know





*hers*

SUMAN





I open my eyes to the sight of my mothers' every morning. She would cut apples for me with her veiny hands in the afternoon. I'd ask for something and watch her cook it in the kitchen, singing and it would be a sight to see. My childhood was spent in love with her and my prayers will hold the same words,

*I want to be her '*

*I want to be her*

*I want to be her*

Then it was her upturned lips that taught me to read, to love the words on the page the way she didn't. I'd ask for a break, and she'd ask for the words I could utter from the books. The same voice would sing me praises and berate my mistakes. She would love me angrily. In that moment, in tears, I'd be on my knees,

*I would never be like her*

*I would never be like her*

*I would never be like her*

At nighttime when my head would hit the pillows I'd realize I am my mother's child

her blood,

her fingertips,

and the way she raises her voice is me

I am her body, in the same way I wanted to be stripped of my own skin, dance in flames and chew my shredded skin to become my own again by sundown.

Nothing was mine to begin with besides this love I wish to be free from.

And I would weep again, silently

## *bodies: heavenly earthly*

zai an

everyday, trillions of meteoroids and asteroids collide with billions of planets most don't reach their surfaces, often burning up in their atmosphere but once in a while, some get large enough to survive the heat hitting their surfaces, leaving dents in their topography  
each hole and crater in their body is a tiny victory,  
a testimony of surviving occasional collisions,  
and they are proud of each of them  
and so should you.  
be proud of your body,  
and its wounds, scars, and stitches  
they are memorabilia of your bravery and strength,  
memoirs of battles you've well fought, won, and moved on,  
and mementos of living and surviving against the challenges of life  
wear each like they're fashion you've always worn, an accent to your personality you  
don't have to be sorry for wearing embellishments of strength, bravery, and beauty

our sun is only one of septillion stars in the universe, of varying in shapes, sizes, colors, ages, rotations and revolutions, brightness and intensities, and even number of planets there are widely diverse bodies among various solar systems and galaxies sometimes, they get too similar, that one is mistaken for another yet sometimes, they get too different that they're like no one especially if they get distinct sunspots, whether they want to or not, and even if they do no one complains about it and neither should we, with our bodies no one should berate how you look, no matter how similar or how different you look when compared to others no one should dictate how others should look, unless it's your own. live your life in the body you wish to be in, wear the accessories you pick, the clothes you prefer, the tattoos you choose, and the piercings you dream of even heavenly bodies agree your body, your choice, however you want or need it to be

# Mga Pabinumdum san Búlan

## LIBULAN

*Para sa akong hinugma na banwa,*

*Hinungdan kamo san kapawa san búlan*

*Sa akon pag inusahan dinhi sa dagway san kalangitan, an búlan la an naging saksi san akon mga panangis ug kasubo, san kasakit san akon hinugma na banwa. Pinili ko na higugmaon kamo hin hilom, na bisan ha akon pagpuyo dinhi sa kahayag san búlan, pagtamdán niyo ak sa sirom ug kasisidman. Ngano man na nahiborong kamo? Ngano man na nasamaran kamo? Ug ngano man na ginbasol niyo an hinungdan niyo? Nababatian ko! Natatan aw ko! Ug iyo kalbaryo nagngangawa abot sa tulan ko!*

*Gin hahangyo ko la na ayaw kam sa akon ka uba, kun an lamrag san búlan la an akon kaya. Dire ako an Diyos na maghuhukom, ug an may kapot san mga kabatanon. Kay bisan ako na pautro utro nga gin lalamon san bakunawa, na hasta san kahasta mao la an akon pulos nakagapos sa waray katapusan nga siklo san hayag ug sirom.*

*Sanglit ayaw ak durua ug basula, kay ako an labi nga maaram kun matiaanano an pait san akon paghigugma.*

*Sugad sana an kinabuhì, an kasakit waray gin pipili na kasing kasing, an kasubo waray dughan na dire ginrurumog, ug an kabiduan waray ginpipili nga ito samtang naghawa pa dida sa kalibutan. Pero ayaw gadla kahulop, kay bisan an pinakamasìrom na dalan, nahahayagan san búlan, an pinakamasulog na sàlog nahuhubas liwat, ngan an delubyo san gab i nababarikas san kaagahon.*

*Pitad la, buhát, ato! Nga bisan manuro an luha, nga bisan nagngingitngit an mga samad, ug maubusan kusog sa dalan. Maisog mo na itakwas an imo kamutangan.*

*Kun umabot an panahon na waray na hayag an búlan, an iyo paglaum an kapti ug lingi a kay mao iton an sisiwak sa imo yana ug sa kadayunan.*

*Hul os na naghigugma,*

*Libulan*

Para sa aking minamahal na bayan,

Kalugdan nawa kayo ng liwanag ng buwan.

Sa aking pag-isa dito sa malawak na kalangitan, ang buwan lang ang tanging naging saksi sa aking mga pagtangis at pighati, dulot ng mga kabiguan ng minamahal kong bayan. Pinili kong mahalin kayo nang tahimik, na kahit ako'y nag-isa dito sa liwanag ng buwan, magsisilbing inyong tanglaw sa kadiliman. Ngurut bakit parin kayo naligaw? Bakit parin kayo'y nasugatan? at bakit sirusisi niyo ang kinahinatnan ng inyong kapalaran? Naririnig ko! Nakikita ko! Ang inyong kalbaryo'y dumadagundong sa paanan ko!

Nakikiusap ako sa inyo na saki'y 'wag magtanum ng galit, sa kadahilanang liwanag lang ng buwan ang aking maibibigay. Hindi ako ang Diyos na maghuhukom, o ang may hawak sa lahat ng mga kasagutan. Dahil kahit ako, hindi ko rin mawari kung bakit paulit-ulit akong nilalaman ng bakunawa, na kahit sa katapusan ng panahon iyon lang ang katuturan ng aking imortal na buhay ang magapos sa walang hanggang siklo ng liwanag at dilim.

Kaya 'wag nyo akong kamuhian at sisihin, dahil ako ang hugit na nakakaalam kung gaano kapait ang aking pag-ibig sa bayan.

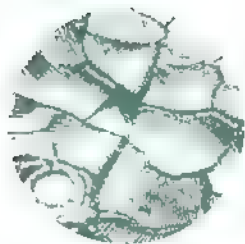
Ganyan marahil ang buhay ang kirot ay walang pinipiling puso, ang pighati ay walang dibdib na hindi dinudurog, at ang hinagpis ay walang ulilang pinipili habang ika'y humihunga pa sa ibabaw ng mundo. Ngurut sana'y hindi kayo tuluyang panghinaan ng loob, dahil ang pinakamadilim na daan, ay naliliwanagan ng buwan, ang ilog na pinakamalakas ang agos sa tuwina'y lumalayo sa dalampasigan, at ang bagsik ng gabi ay nababalikwas ng buking liwayway.

Pumutad ka lang, tumayo, at patuloy na lumaban! Na kahit tumutulo ang luha, na kahit nagngingitingit ang mga sugat, at kahit maubusan ng lakas sa daan. Matapang mong inilaban ang iyong sarili.

Kung dumating man ang panahon na wala n'ang liwanag ang buwan, panghawakan niyo ang natitira niyong pag-asa, dahil iyan nalang ang inyong mumunting ilaw upang mabanaagan ang aruno ng hinaharap.

Lubos na nagmamahal,

Libulan



## *my friend, the polluted*

GALE NE

The sky towered above his friend the earth, in dismay The glittery and lively stars plastered all over his body dimmed for her, for she was in far worse shape than the last time he saw her

"My *word*, friend...what has become of you?" he pondered, his head filled to the brim with wariness and concern "I cannot bear the sight..." His eyes go back and forth, assessing the condition of his life long friend

The earth looked up at her ethereal friend above, tired and weary

"Dear friend...I am so sorry that you have to see me like this " weakly whispered the earth.

"I am even more sorry that I cannot step down from my domain and come to your aid," sadly replied the sky "What happened to you? It has only been a short time since our last reunion, yet you come back worse each time "

As she tried to speak, the earth's torso heaved in and out with great difficulty,  
with some of the land on it cracking. It was getting hard  
to breathe

"I opened my walls to them.. but yet they  
kept cutting them down and taking  
more and more from me,"

She gestured to the many trees that were sprinkled onto her body. Oak, pine,  
birch, fir. almost every tree was cruelly slain, and were either adorned in axe  
and chainsaw marks, or charred to the point of no return,  
with some still even burning brightly

The earth cried in pain seeing her fauna being demolished. her tears  
coursed through her many faces, visibly polluted by scraps of  
garbage and toxins

"They keep pouring things into my  
waters with not a single care in  
the world  
everyday I am sick to my stomach  
because of the sewage that swirls  
through my veins," she mutters  
"Even my creations are tainted  
by this trash!"

She tears up while lifting up a single seabird to the sky its throat is caught in a strangling embrace by a plastic beer holder The sky shuddered at the sight, unsettled by its dying squawks.

"It is so hard to breathe," desperately choked the earth. "Noxious air always fills my lungs, no matter how much I try to reach out to you, sky." She strains herself trying to stretch her arm out towards him, and sighs tiredly when she realizes she cannot reach him.

The sky gazes at her in worry There is so much he wants to do at the moment, yet so little he can actually do, as he is bound by his realm.

"You are so strong, yet I cannot help but wonder how you are still standing, despite what has happened."

The earth looks to the side, dejected and sniffing

"I am not as strong as you think I am, kind friend. I'm surprised that I'm still here...with all this happening to me, I should have been damaged irreversibly a long time ago." She chuckles



. I guess I've been used to it, sky Humans  
have been around for a while, so I've  
always taught myself how to catch up with  
them and their silly developments Yet, no  
matter how much I did to adapt, they always  
seemed to overtake me "

"And with the amount of things they're doing  
in the present even, I won't be surprised if  
I'm permanently weakened. The needs and  
desires of humans are undying and  
unlimited, and I can't churn them all out so  
quickly At this pace, I'll deteriorate even  
faster "

"But earth...your limit What if you  
break your limit, friend?"

"..."

*"Then I shall let it break, and let the  
humans throw themselves at my mercy."*



# *life of a body*

mula sa sinulat ni Ronron

Para sa mga inaabuso, ang buhay ay isang tanikala.

Lumaki sa takot sa kamatayan at sa patuloy na pangangailangang protektahan ang isang malungkot na buhay sa pagbabayad ng mga bayarin at paglubog sa utang upang mapahaba ang hirunga at kumapit sa pilosopiyang ito ay regalo mula sa Diyos, kailan ito dapat itigil?

Iniwan ba ng Diyos ang mga inaabuso dahil naniniwala sila sa isang diyos?



# *tanikala*

LE TRARE TRATO

Kaluskos ng mga paang unting unti lumalapit sa kinalalagyan  
Gabi gabing hinahabol, ako ay ayaw tantanan at bitawan  
Karpas sa bilis na lumayo kaya'y tsinelas ko ay napudpod  
Sa lugar na madilim, liwanag ay hundi maabot

Liwanag man ay nasilayan at ang araw ay dumating  
Simbolo raw ng pag asa ngunit dilim ang yumakap saakin  
Huli na nung dumating, noong kinakailangan hindi masilip  
Nagtago sa isang gilid, kasama ng alaalang mapait

Hikbing hindi makawala sa boses kong pirigulan  
Mga karnay itinulak, pagkalas hundi magawa  
Nilakbay ang bawat parte siyang nagiwan ng bakas  
Kung maari lang putulin ngunit sa isip siya'y nanahan

Ang katawan ko ay hindi ko na naramdamang sa akin  
 Tinugnan sa harap ng salamun, hindi na tulad ng dati  
 Namamayani ang kakulangan, kompleto man ang katawan  
 Buhay na siyang kinuha, ngayon ay walang laman

Hindi liwanag ang kabayaran sa alaala  
 Kahit kamatayan hindi ito kayang takasan  
 Nais baguhin ang mapait na naranasan  
 Hindi ikukulong sa panaginip ang inaasan

Pagsapit ng gabi, kaluskos ng paa ay muling narinig  
 Hinabol, hindi tumigil, hanggat siya'y hindi nahuhuli  
 Kalansing ng tulis, malakas na sigaw ang narinig  
 Paggising ay pawis na pawis, sa harap may pulis

Pinosasan aking kamay, inilagay sa kulungan  
 Hindi nakuha ang hustiya, kahit paghuganti nagawa  
 Nandito pa rin ang marka, na kailanman hindi mawawala  
 Natapos ang lahat nung piraso ng katawan ko'y nakakalat  
 Dinurog ang utak para alaala'y magwakas

# *Growing Pains*

AGNI RIVERA

This is not my body  
or at least what it used to be

My legs do not fit anymore in these jeans,  
all four of them don't

It started growing two years ago,  
when she visited me,  
on a clear midday in March her name grief  
Grief came knocking ever so suddenly,  
she surprised me with a pair of appendages  
despite the completeness of my own

Our grief grows with us  
sometimes bigger than us overwhelming, overwhelming,  
overstaying its welcome  
Thus I know, thus I'm sure of

She grew me extra limbs,  
legs to avoid love,  
to equally avoid loss  
Run faster, walk faster,  
move .. increasingly .. away  
Away from her, from him, from them,  
and from yourself  
Avoid baring your soul and sharing your heart,  
this, is the only way to avoid loss,  
and thus she knows and thus she's sure of  
Your limbs however excess are there for a reason.  
They'll never fit in clothes  
in the fashion of who you once were

Which leads us to a voice,  
 emerging from the deep depths of your chest disappointed, disgruntled, and  
 disorienting A voice you didn't know you had,  
 Her name trauma

Anger born out of spite and frustration,  
 out of failures and heartbreaks  
 She asks were you not enough?  
 She answers you weren't  
 And then she screams disappointed,  
 disgruntled, disorienting.  
 Why didn't you choose to be enough?  
 The screams, these answers, in your head are hers She didn't grow you extra  
 ears (why would she?) and your body only has two, you  
 don't realize that these voices (loud noises) are not yours

In the shadows,  
 Two hands emerge above your own.  
 These seeded from, her name as you've known, jealousy a clawing parasite  
 bursting at the seams

She tells you the world is cruel  
 and it takes and it takes more than it gives.  
 It uses you until you're spent  
 reverse it.

Let me grow you hands that rival that of the world As greed grows so too shall  
 our possessions You examine the hands that aren't really yours her fingers  
 snatch before you could utter no

Your head, on the other,  
 is not exempt from these pains  
 Horns, curling by your temples anxieties

It turns you equally harsh as the world  
 she knows this, she's sure of it.  
 Uncertainties plague your being  
 so the next best thing is to be on the defense Always fighting, deflecting, and  
 seething  
 seeding the birth of your worries.

Is it tiring?  
 To mistake toughness for cruelty?  
 To misidentify courage for harshness?

Breathe, you are allowed to

And she tells you. no,  
lengthens the horns and commands you to change  
Fear is the enemy, and so,  
it must be subdued, control it before  
it controls you  
Tiring, yes?

To have bodies that are no longer that  
just that  
To have bodies that are no longer ours  
To have limbs that pedal you faster and farther from love  
To have hands that take too much in the fear of being left too little To croak out  
a voice that tells you enough and at the same time not To have horns that  
seethe anger and refuse gentleness

To grow parts and  
grow pains

But alas,  
look into each scar,  
investigate the niches of each travesty and see,  
that we also grew hope

Hope that can only be found through the madness  
we survive  
A renewed sight,  
searching and pushing towards a future  
one that you've been gifted.  
Hope that births wisdom and a tenacious spirit against the excess and the pain.

Pain wishes to be known,  
manifesting itself through parts we never  
thought of nor wanted.

But so does its twin named hope

Tiring, yes. and yet,  
renewing  
To have bodies that are no longer just that.



We may have limbs that ask us to run,  
 but there's no reason for us to not find each way back.  
 On the same feet that avoids grief,  
 meet her halfway and say welcome  
 We may have hands that know nothing than take,  
 but let time awaken one's muscle memory from slumber  
 Unclasp them, unfurl your fingers,  
 and join them in acceptance;  
 meet jealousy halfway patient, still,  
 and waiting for the world to give  
 and say thank you

We may have voices telling us to shrink ourselves,  
 but listen, truly listen, and  
 meet trauma halfway, say  
 I have been waiting for our conversation.

We may have horns hardened by fears,  
 but remember, even the stubbornest bone can break.  
 Be pliant, meet her halfway and say  
 allow me to respond in gentleness

We grew parts we didn't think we wanted.  
 We grew parts we're sure are never wanted.  
 It may spring out carefully or  
 ever so suddenly  
 through tears, worries, and fears,  
 but in their absence,  
 no hope nor wisdom would grow with us.

And this I know, this I'm sure of  
 That for as long as we live  
 as we hope  
 we'll grow parts and  
 we'll grow pains.

# *Story of My Life - Walang Direction*

ELY

My father wants me dead.

From the moment I was born, I was told I was the “chosen sacrifice”

“Nabubuhay ka para sa amin!”

“Nagmula ka sa akin, ang iyo ay akin!”

“Kung wala ako ay wala ka sa mundo!”

Ilan lang yan sa mga diktang narinig ko hanggang sa pagtanda

Growing up, I always do what my father tells me to do.  
Of course, I'm the junior eh.  
It is like I am programmed to move according to his plan.

K.k.k. lang.

"Tumugtog ka sa simbahan, purihin ang itaas!"

Ang K. k.k. kisame?

"Ngumuti ka sa miyembro, tulungan mo sila!"

Ang K. k. k. kapatiran?

Wishing that after this, I will hear the word "Proud kami sa'yo "

K. k. k. kayo?

It never came

The greed of validation from my father grew while an increasing disparity  
lived between us

"Anak, Samahan mo naman ako sa seminar sa prayer mountain."

After being distant to him, a silly hope arose. It may be a chance for  
reconciliation.

He hugs me like it's the first time in my life, and last time for him.  
We shared stories we never told to anyone

"Pa, alam mo ba chismus na may pinatay daw sa bundok na babae kaya  
naririnig kada full moon yung iyak niya? Sa tingin mo totoo yun?"

Sinagot ako ng aking ama ng katahimikan at kinuha ang libro ngayon ko  
lamang nakita. Binasa ang nalalaman sa lenggwaheng hindi ko  
maintindihan.

Weeping noises felt near. It grows stronger and stronger. The place  
becomes bizarre.

"Totoo ang chismus!" at nagpakita ng babaeng pinanggalingan ng ingay

"Malipayon nga pabalik, akong hirugugma," Pagkasabi ng ama ay niyakap  
ako ng babaeng hindi kilala.

Ang gaan sa pakiramdam dahil ako'y unti unti na palang kinukuhaan ng  
hininga.

# What Keeps Me Up at Night

TUL DOK KUWIT

A body lies awake at night

You are standing in the middle of a room whose four walls celebrate the dead of night, with only a single window allowing moonlight to illuminate a figure lying in bed. In the depth of gloom and the abyss of painstaking silence, it lies unmoved—seemingly unperturbed of your presence. And in the scarce luminescence brought upon the goddess of the night, you faintly see its physique that is yet to be tarnished by time; but its eyes—wide open and unblinking, signal otherwise.

You decide to take a closer look, so you walk slowly and cautiously toward the hibernating mass of anonymity. As your steps on the wooden floor echoes in the room, your eyes locked on the mystery you wish to unfurl, you still manage to grasp an image of the surroundings through your peripheral. The space is diminutive, yet it managed to house a study table, a lean drawer, a bedside table and a single bed. Despite the darkness, the pile of used clothes at the corner, the disarranged books on the study table, and the unwashed coffee mug on the bedside make it evident that the space is lived in—and the small chips and cracks on the woodwork of the furniture suggest that it has been for quite a while.

You now stand at the foot of the bed—towering over the immobile frame, the scant gleam of moonlight managed to unmask some pieces of the puzzle that discombobulates you. The figure kept its stance, despite the apparent presence of a complete stranger; it lays there—silent and unbothered. Its eyes are wide open, features relaxed, muscles showing no signs of tension, its skin growing paler as it is hit by moonlight that intensifies as you go deeper into the night. You decide that it is not enough to satiate your curiosity, so you lean closer with hopes that closing the gap would mean closing the misunderstanding between you and this peculiar figure. As you carry on with your scrutiny, you hear a voice:

"Do you want to know what keeps me up at night?"

The sudden enunciation cut through the thick wall of silence like a blade. It came from the inert figure that lies before you, yet its lips remained unmoved. It was a paranormal phenomenon—yet you somehow felt at ease.

"Tell me." You said,

with astounding confidence, oblivious of the clairvoyance that lies ahead.

It's the monsters under my bed  
Their footsteps slow but discernible  
climbing onto my back whispering things that spark suspense and heighten  
unease

My legs creak under their weight

It is the voices from my closet  
Mumbling words I wish I never said,  
provoking thoughts I wish never existed.  
My ears bleed from their blaring gibberish.

It is the ghosts in the mirror  
Never too close but always in the peripheral  
Perfect duplicates of the person I thought I would become  
My eyes tormented by the imagery they show

You see, when you're born in a haunted house,  
it only takes a matter of time before its evil consumes you.  
So I stayed restless always on the watch of what may attack  
Never have I felt even a drop of serenity until now "

A lot of words were said, yet the figure exhibited no signs of motion. You stand  
there unmoved, your curiosity is now far gone, for like the body that lies awake  
before you, you feel at peace. In this room, whose four walls celebrate the dead  
of night, with only a single window that allows the moonlight to illuminate a  
figure, in the depth of gloom and the abyss of painstaking silence, the body said  
"It's time to fall asleep "

"It's time to fall asleep " You replied.

# Kulay

POPOY

Nasa parke kayo noon. Magkahawak kamay at hindi mawala ang mga ngiti sa inyong mga mukha. Marahan mong idinampi ang iyong kanang kamay sa bilog na hulma ng kaniyang tiyan. Walong buwan na ang bata sa kaniyang sinapupunan. Nang mahawakan mo ito, naipinta mo na sa iyong isip ang kaniyang magiging itsura, hubog, at tindig. Kumakabog ang puso mo sa saya. Mayroong parang sumabog sa kalooban mo, tila mga makukulay na apoy sa kalangitan. Nasasabik kang magtama ang iyong mga mata at mayakap siya nang tuluyan.

Bago kayo umuwi ay bumili kayo ng ube halayang pianglilhian niya noon. Lahat ng gusto kainin niya ay binibili mo, kahit pa pinagkakasya mo lang noon ang pera mo sa pa-ekstra ekstrang pagpipintura sa mga bahay, dahil ganoon ka magmahal.

Iniluwal na ang buhay na matagal mong hinuntay. Pinagpapawisan ka ng malamug nang pinapahawak sa 'yo ng kumadrone ang bata. Medyo nanginginig pa ang mga kamay ngurut nang dumampi ang iyong kamay sa kaniya kaliwang palad ay agad niya itong kinulong sa pamamagitan ng kaniyang mga daliri. Walang pagsidlan ang iyong tuwa, pagkasabik, maging ang kaba.

Ang ingay ng pag-iyak ng bata at ang boses mo na nagpapatahan dito ang siya na lamang pumuno sa apat na sulok ng tahanan niyo noon. Binawian ng buhay ang nanay ng bata, ang kaniyang mo. Hindi na bumalik ang kaniyang lakas matapos magluwal ng buhay.

Mula noon, isinumpa mo na huhubugin mo ang pagkatao ng batang tangan mo. Ikaw ang huhulma sa kaniya. Sabi mo, tuturuan mo siyang magbisikleta, magkumpuni ng mga gamit, at maging ang pagpipintura mo, gusto mong ipamana sa kaniya. Una mong ituturo sa kaniya ang mga kulay kaysa sa mga letra, biro mo pa noon.

Ngurut hindi siya lumaki sa kung paano mo ginusto. Napansin mong ang mga lakad ay kumekendeng kahit pa ilang beses mong sabihing dapat matikas. Maaga naman siyang natuto sa mga kulay noon, tulad ng gusto mo. Maliban sa tinuro mo na iyon, hindi niya isinabuhay ang mga bagay na ipinipilit mo. Lumipas ang panahon at pinuno mo ng galit ang kalooban mo.

Pula Nangangalit ang iyong mga ngipin, kamao, at bisig na ang hatid ay takot at bangungot na bitbit hanggang yumao. Walang humpay ang pagbunggo ng mga mabibigat mong suntok, tulak, at sipa sa mukha, at sikmura. Akala mo siguro magbabago kapag napaputok mo ang nguso at nag iwan ka ng sandamaknak na mga pasa.

Kahel Ang galit mo ay unti unting nabahiran ng pang unawa. Kumukunot pa rin ang noo at nabubuhay ang kamao mo kapag nakakarinig ng mga kutya at insulto. Ngurut nakakakita ka na ng mga sa sagot sa bakit at paano. Mas gumaan ang pakiramdam sa pagtingin.

Dilaw Sumasama ka na kapag namimili ng mga damit niya sa palengke. Ikaw pa nga mismo ang pumili ng isang dilaw na bistida sa palengke kasi alam mong bagay sa kaniya iyon. Hinayaan mo na rin siyang magpahaba ng buhok na noo'y pilit mong kinakalbo. Hindi maitatangi sa iyong mga mata na masaya ka na rin kapag nakikita siyang nagsusuot sa mga bestida at palda na binibili niya.

Berde Kinulayan niya ng berde ang buhok na lagpas balik. Natawa ka pa noon dahil naisip mo na siya ang nilalarawan ni Ely Buendia sa kaniyang kanta. Gusto mong humingi nang tawad sa mga pananakit mo noon, ngurut nahiya ka. Ang ginawa mo, tinulungan mo siya ng magkulay sa parte ng kaniyang buhok na hindi niya makulayan nang ayos.

Asul. Tila asul na dagat ang kulay ng kalangitan noon. Ang mga ulap tila bulak na nagkalat. Maaliwalas sa pakiramdam ang bawat pagdampi sa balat ng hangin. Nakita mo siyang nagsasanay maglagay ng iba't ibang kulay sa kaniyang mga talukap, pisngi, at labi. Pumasok siya ka sa kwarto niya para samahan siyang magsanay. Hinayaan mo siyang kulayan rin ang iyong talukap, labi, at pisngi. Nagtatawanan kapag nagmumukhang payaso sa kapal ng pagkakalagay.

Lila Sa pagtunog ng kampana ay siyang paglabas ng mga dumalo sa misa noong Linggong iyon. Unang beses niyong nagsimba nang magkasama. Nabuhag ng mga mata niya ang salansan ng ube halaya sa isang tindahan. Hinugot ng panay ugat na kanang kamay mo ang singkwenta pesos mula sa bulsa ng harapan ng pinaglumaan mo ng pantalon. Hinawi naman niya ito. Sinabi niya na siya na ang magbabayad, sabay ngiti. Noon mo napagtanto na nakuha niya pala mula sa nanay niya ang mga mata, kilay, at ngiti nito.

Oo, hindi naging akma sa inihulma mo sa iyong isipan noon ang naging hubog at tindig niya. Malayo at magkaiba. Ngurut, natutunan mo nang tanggapin ang korte at kurba na nais niya dahil ito ay bumubuo sa kung sino at ano siya. Hindi maitatangi na hinulma niya ang iyong pagkatao. Napagtanto mo na hinubog ka ng taong dapat sana'y huhubugin mo base sa nais mo. Hinubog at binuo niya ang bawat bahagi ng iyong pagkatao, pagiging ama, at pagiging lalaki.

*kunyare nasa  
kabilang table siya*

ELBITANYO





never unwrite the stories of your former lover,  
 never bear grudge a love you once had,  
 never unlove the human who once touched your soul.

the world is but a small town,  
 every turn, every street, every corner  
 intentionally stitches your paths  
 cruel isn't it?  
 just think of it as another day of destiny's mischievous jokes but I didn't see that  
 breaking my heart was its humor

so when you see the person who once held your heart  
 flip your hair in disgust, and shout "Ay pinatulan ko pala ang kumaw na yan?  
 Diyos ko naman. parang binaboy ko ang aking standards " give 'em a smirk and  
 do another hair flip

Above all, never listen to everything I just said

Now go order another shot of tequila!



*draft(28).docx*

## INTRODUCTION

I found out that I am nothing but a charlatan as I look at my reflection, and see someone else's skin that I poached, bleeding I am somebody who's been wearing it an imitator creating cheap carbon copies of something I do not actually possess and still gallantly brag about it as if I was a prodigy As if it was something I own

I scribble endlessly on blank pages as though the charcoal I use creates something that actually matters Thinking that the traces of my inked soul that I have left on paper actually have a life, breathing, like a Fort Santiago summer That it is worthy of receiving a second look amongst golden books on shelves of the bookstore I frequent I write, and bleed, and then scream beginnings as it is the only thing I am truly capable of The genesis and everything that is fleeting Those are the things that this body of mine will be good at It is something I will only ever be good at A self-proclaimed writer, who could never write past the beginning and commit to seeing the end of what he has written Because that is all I ever will be Because beneath the facade and the skin, the body I wear could only reach certain heights that are adequately reachable It could only see so shallowly under a crest-fallen tree It could only ever speak for the sake of compliance and out of duty It could only write piles of meaningless words out of a dictionary's debauchery It is among the fake niceties, the common, the insignificant, and the inadequacy that is my body, hiding among those in a masquerade

So let me tell you something

## BODY

## CONCLUSION

That the emptiness of the in-between and of it all is proof, that I can't, I just never can tell you anything something so genuine

BODY



*Siklo*

POPOY

Alas singko na ng hapon. Patay na ang init ng araw. Tuyo na ang pawis sa likod, noo, at leeg. Pagal na ang mga paa. Ngalay na ang mga binti. Kumakalam na ang sikmura.

Naglalakad pauwi dahil baryang anim na piso na lang ang siyang kumakalansing sa bulsa ng lumang pantalon na nabili noon sa ukay ukay. Hindi sapat na ibayad pang pamasaha sa dyip. Habang tinatahak ang kalsada pauwi, napatingala saglit sa langit.

Napadaan sa isang tindahan at bumili ng isang stick ng sigarilyo. Nanginginig na kamay ang siyang pinang abot sa baryang anim na piso sa bulsa. Kinuha ang lighter na nakasabit at hinarangan ng kaliwang kamay ang hangin na maaring umihip sa apoy. Napawi kahit papaano ang kanyang gutom at nanahimik ang sikmurang nagwawala.

Alas syete na noon ng gabi. Marahan ang naging paglalakad kaya inabot na ng dilim. Wala ng lakas. Sa susunod na linggo pa mahahawakan ng mga nanginginig na kamay ang kabayaran sa pagbibilad sa araw at pagkilos nang walang puknat.

Sa susunod na linggo pa makakatikim ng ulam at kanin. Ngayong gabi ay susubukang makakuha ng lakas muli para kumayod bukas mula sa pagpikit at paghumlay sa semento.

# *they shape*

Knightrö

My Mama told me I'm beautiful  
I believed it.  
In my childhood, I didn't worry about how I look

*then*

*I grew in a generation of acceptance  
where I do not accept myself*

*I listen to everyone with open hearts but I  
ignore my own, I preach to not fear but when  
I look in the mirror, I feel insecure.*

this is not what they said how I look,  
this is not what they wrote how I move

*how am I even?*

odd ly ugly, im paired

that

I often wonder how different life would be  
if I said more and held less Maybe, I would  
have said how much their words meant to  
me Instead of speaking and fighting with  
them, I kept it all in and fought with  
myself. Just maybe they would have found  
value in all the words I did not say

for

if everyone speaks of me, should I become  
something of their words or become my  
own speech?

Struggling to be free  
Dying to be alive

# *Pabalat na Pabula*

LEO

*Sa bawat gabi, umiyyak ang kalabaw at baka kasama ng kanilang mga alamat. Sa alinsangan ng hangì'y nangangati sa init, nagpupumiglas. Mga alulong ng sakit at hirap, na pilit itinatago sa umaga, ang nag-aaklas. Uhaw, gutom, nagmamakaawa.*

Narunìp ang damit ng kalabaw. Sabi nila, matapos maligo sa sapa kasabay ng baka, tila hindi sinasadyang nagkapalit ang isinuot nilang mga balat at nasisikipan sa ngayon, nasasakal. Pinipilit n'yang pagkasyahin ang sarili sa sikip upang iwasang maging hubad sa harap ng lahat. Pinipilit n'yang isuot ang sarili sa damit na hindi naman sa kanya sa tiwalang balang araw luluwag din iyon.

Ngunut hindi luluwag ang balat ng kalabaw. Hindi n'ya mararanasang matiwasay na humunga kasabay ng marahang pag-ihap ng hangin sa bukid n'yang pinagtatrabahuhan.

Humuhuhò naman ang damit ng baka. Matapos maligo sa sapa kasabay ng kalabaw, tila hindi sinasadyang nagkapalit ang isinuot nilang balat at nabibigatan sa ngayon. Maswerte sa kung tutuusin sa komportable n'yang tuwalya. Maluwag na may kasamang pribilehiyo, nakalulunod. Araw araw pinipilit n'yang buhatin ang balat na maluwag, umaasang balang araw gagaan din iyon.

Ngunut hindi gagaan ang pabigat sa baka. Hindi n'ya mararanasang tumakbo nang mabilis, simbilibis ng hangin sa kanya ay humahaplos sa punong sa kanya ay pinagtalian.



Lumaki akong nagbabasa ng mga alamat Madali akong mabigharu sa kahiwagaan ng mga bagay na hindi maipaliwanag ng mura kong isipan. Bawat tanong ko noon, ipinaliliwanag ng minamahal kong mga alamat

Ngurut ngayong masasabi kong kahit paano ay tumanda na ako, nasa kalagitnaan ng kolehiyo, tila mas marami atang tanong ang nariba sa akin. Ngayong sinusubukan kong palayain ang sarili mula sa bigkis ng kanormalan, kailangan ko ata ng hiwaga ng alamat para ipaliwanag ang kaibahan.

Katulad ng kalabaw, noon pa ipinagkakasya ang sarili sa katauhang hindi ko ginustong maging Pilit na itinutuwid ang katawang nangangalay na sa sikip na sumasakal sa pagkataong nagpupumilit Gustong punitin ang magaspang na balat para makahinga dahil hinal na hinal na sa pag aantay ng pagluwag nito

Kagaya ng baka, nakakulong sa ideyang kailangan kong maging komportable na lamang Pribilehiyong magkaroon ng balat na hindi nakasasakal. Ngurut hindi maginhawang bitbitin ang bigat ng hindi matanggap na sarili. Gustong maghubad, maging malayang tumakbo nang mabilis nang walang nakakalunod na tuwalya ang tatakip

Kagaya ng kalabaw at baka, pinipilit kong pangatawanan ang balat na hindi naman ginustong paglagyan. Sa bawat harap sa salamin ay nalulunod sa bigat ng identidad na idinidukta ng lipunang dapat daw ay masunod. Iuwing kaharap ang aparador, nasasakal sa ideyolohyang maisusuot lang ang nararapat daw isuot

*Sa bawat gabi, umuyak ang kalabaw at baka kasama ng kanilang mga alamat Uhaw, gutom, nagmamakaawa Mga alulong ng sakit at hirap, na pilit itinatago sa umaga, ang nag aaklas Uhaw, gutom, nagmamakaawa Nagmamakaawang balang araw, matatanggap din ang kaibahang hindi naman dapat kakaiba.*

## *passage of time*

MIRASOL

5:00 am

Blood. Clumpy, foreign, and acrid were the greetings to the little girls day. She didnt know that this would happen now at ten years old on a normal school day.

Her mother had seen her then, surprise and joy overcoming her features.

"Congratulations, anak!" she greeted her then, "ganap na babae ka na."

She recalled the lessons and stories she heard about this. That once a month, the inner lining of the uterus discharges blood and mucosal tissue through her vagina. Someone even said that it was a sign of maturity, a rite of passage to signify womanhood. She recalled how confused she was at that statement.

Hearing that from her mom then, her question didnt change: How can a ten year old be linked to womanhood?

She put that question at the back of her mind as she grimaced at her moms next few words.

"Akin na yung panty mo, nak. Labhan ko para ipahid sa mukha mo iwas pimples!"

**5:00 pm**

In countries that experience autumn, its usual signals were the cold breeze and falling leaves. The trees which were once dotted with green were now littered with yellows, threatening to fall at any instant. It's as if nature allows nature to breathe—to let go and to grow.

But to her, autumn was not her most pressing issue at the moment. She was in a tropical country after all. Instead of a cold breeze, her body was now covered in a sheer layer of sweat inside the department store's fitting room.

Since it was December already, her school's annual Christmas party was approaching. She recalled her friends gushing about the clothes they'll wear. As a twelve-year-old, her response was to ask her mom to go shopping that Saturday.

However, life wasn't in her favor.

"*Anak, natagalan ka na diyay,*" she heard her mother ask from outside, concern in her voice.

She looked at herself in the mirror and she can't help but feel disappointed. The mustard shade of the dress flattered her tan skin beautifully, highlighting her eyes and hair well. However, it was her body that betrayed her.

Her legs were flat out displayed and she can't help but criticize how thick they were. Her stomach mocked her too, bulging out unflatteringly at every side view. And what made her feel worst were the buttons that didn't budge at any go. It's as if her body threatens to burst out of the material at anytime too.

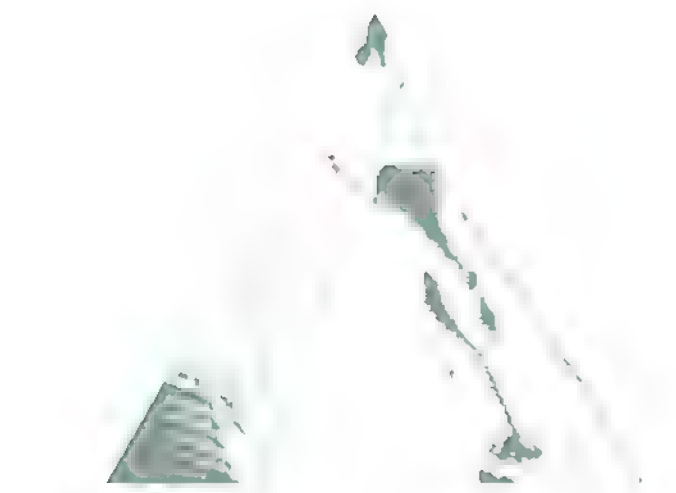
"*Iba nalang, ma,*" she called out lightly in response, slowly removing the dress, opened the door to let her mother see the fitting and she looked at her sadly.

Her mother held her hand. "*Sige, anak,*" she smiled comfortingly. "*mag try pa tayo ng iba.*"

**12:00 noon**

Green, she realized, was her favorite color. It reminds her of her grandmother's plants that she tends to religiously, the sage cardigan her mother knit for her and the park she habitually visits to wind down.

Twenty-two years of her life have passed by like a breeze. She allowed herself to breathe, her body was hers and hers to love.



# *death of a body*

mula sa sinulat ni Raven

Para sa pasista ang kamatayan ay paglaya

Ang kamatayan ng saksi, ang kamatayan ng katunggali, ang kamatayan ng rebolusyon, ang kamatayan ng nahatulang sarili.

# *desecrated thy body was*

p maryosep

Isang Maria ang nilapastangan at binawian ng buhay at pangarap noong Hunyo 29, 1993. 30 taon na ang nakakaran ngunit ang kwento mo ay patuloy na mag-aalab upang pasiklabin ang hustisya sa mga biktima ng pang-aabuso at inhustisya sa ating lipunan.

*thy hands was tied  
and cried massively  
thy head blown of  
that bled ungrudgingly*

maawa na po kayo! wag po ..  
gusto ko nang umuwi...  
putang ina!  
paulit ulit kong sinabi yan sa kanila

*thy mouth was stuffed  
stifling thy voices  
kneeling and begging  
to stop the ravishing forces*

mahugpit, madun, at mabaho  
pawis, luha, at dugo ay naghalo  
di makahulagpos sa pagkagapos  
sinubukan kong sumigaw pero ayaw

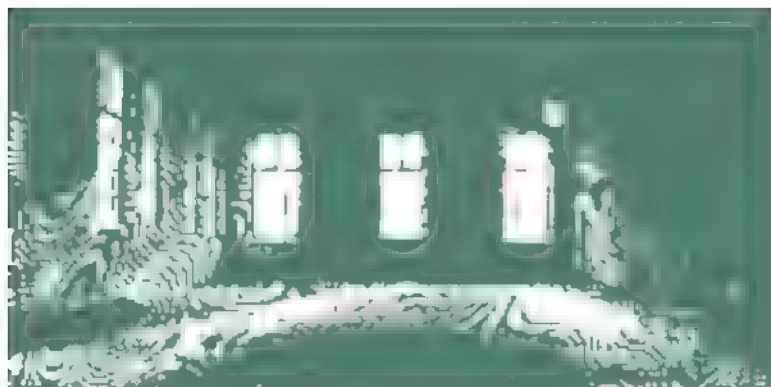
[psst.. tahimik lang daw]

*thy plea oh Mary falls on deaf ears  
thy eyes of hope was filled with tears  
desecrated was thy once fair form,  
left cold and lifeless, a sight forlorn*

nanlilisik ang kanulang mga mata  
inunda ang nakakasulasok na amoy ng  
inhustisya umaatungal silang umuungol  
sa saliw ng aking paghagulhol

*thy body left in a state so dire,  
devoid of warmth, of life, of fire  
like a motherland in turmoil dire,  
desecrated thy glory mired*

tulad mo oh Inang Bayan ko  
bawat sulok ng katawan ko ay markado  
ako ay nananalangin kay Maria  
nawa y marinig ang panaghoy ng bawat  
biktima





# *bizarre*

HARMONY

Skeleton in my closet  
Awakes my soul  
Screams intensify  
Yet, I couldn't adhere

Conceal, raging hombre  
Propel or defer, futile  
Sojourn with peace scant  
Ceaseless shackles dwell

Caressed, peculiar ardor  
Phantom of hope arouse  
Retaliate but no vain  
Justice confined

# *dead/vessel*

ZMB

when do we stop existing?

when a rogue virus spreads and overturns the status of those who have met their death, the world finds itself on the brink of extinction. there are only a few beating hearts left roaming the streets. the rest of the world finds itself in a state of unfortunate immortality. rotting skin, frozen hearts, and thoughts that are almost non-existent.

there is a mall somewhere. it used to be filled to the brim with life. at the heart of the tattered building, right by the escalator wall, sits a corpse. well, a body. he is not dead yet. ruined is the word. his arm is barely hanging on by the threads of his pale muscle's strings, his jaw is unhinged, his face is contorted by a process known as decomposition.

what makes him alive? the low, scratchy grumble emanating from his throat? the frantic movement of his singular eyeball, perhaps searching for possible prey that wandered this empty, moss-ridden part of the mall? his heart does not breathe life into his system, nor do his lungs into his body. these sounds are mere mockery of what it truly means to 'breathe'.

so, what makes him alive? when do we stop existing?

is it when our bodies start to decay? he sits there absentmindedly, his body covered with signs of time and death. red seeps into the wrinkles of his brain, but the very organ resists failure. his mind, all things considered, lives.

is it when our emotions cease to exist? the undead are not conscious. not exactly. they walk the streets with only one thing in mind: hunger, and desperation for anything that could satisfy its intensity. yet, that in itself is an emotion. it consumes him, wholly. but it thrives in him, still.

is it when we no longer hold on to life? when we let go of the life we've created for ourselves and for others? when we stop feeling empathy, or when we look back at certain memories and feel nothing? when we don't feel?

and yet, even as time decays his psyche and skin, he sits there, his gaze wandering over to the shop opposite of him. in truth, he was a resident of this town. his entire life, his entire being, the construction of his very identity they all took place here, in this place that used to be so full of life

as he stares, a tiny thought seeps into what is left of his mind. there is still a nagging familiarity towards his surroundings. he finds leftover visions in scattered pieces of porcelain and ruined cloth on the floor, no matter how trivial they may be in the face of the apocalypse. he looks on and remembers every bout of joy over momentous victories or simply over the little things. every tear shed for something good or bad. every thing that's made him seethe or want to shout and rip his throat out. every disappointment. every reminder of what it means to be alive.

when did he stop existing? perhaps the real question, above all, does he still exist? he cannot answer for himself, and yet, the noise from his throat increases in volume as he shuffles through the memories that pass by him like little sparks. little flickers, not fully clear, but there. somehow still alive and telling him. this is how you used to be.

some will say, no. he is not. majority of the humans that are left traversing these ruined lands will not think twice about grasping their axe and swinging for a kill. they will see him as nothing but a risk. someone or something that takes and takes and takes life, but does not possess it.

but some may beg to differ. we can see a body as a vessel of sorts and see that life occurs through what we feel. what we experience, what we do. eventually, when he becomes one with the ground once more and nature takes its claim of the entire mall, what is left? his memories, perhaps, but only as marks in time. that is how we exist.

that is what makes us alive.

a body is a vessel, a life is a memory.



# *Gabi*

Wine Rivas

Sa kasikatan ng buwan,  
hindi maituturing na laro ang  
pagitan  
sa dalawang katawan  
kung puso ang sinasamo.

Mahuyain ang  
binitawang ngiti  
bilang pambati na  
nagnakaw  
sa lahat ng hangin  
sa ating munting espasyo

Pinagtakpan  
ang nadarama,  
hindi naman pwedeng  
agad makita  
ang lahat ng baraha

Marahul gumana,  
sapagkat sinabi mong  
madaya,  
bakit ikaw lang,  
ang kinakabahan?

Hindi mapigulang tawa,  
habang hinuhuli  
ang iyong natatanging mga kamay,  
sinamantalang lagyan  
ng mga hindi mapigulang halik

saka nilapat  
sa aking dibdib

Dama mo ba  
ang kabog  
ng pusong

kumakawala,  
nais nang  
mapasaiyo

hindi lamang  
sa gabing ito,  
ngurut  
panghabambuhay

Sa pamumuo ng luha  
sa iyong nagniningrung  
na mga mata,  
nagawa mo pa  
akong hampasin  
at saka niyapos

Tahimik ang paligid  
maliban  
sa taimtim na paghinga  
para sa pangakong  
nalalapit ang pagkamt

Biruyayaan  
ng iyong matatamis na halik,  
parehong malay  
sa bawat dampi,  
alay ng mga labi,  
sa bawat parte  
ng kayang abutin nang mas

malalim  
pa sa balat

Magmula doon,  
nagsimula ang paghangos,  
kumaripas ang mga hawak ngunit  
hindi nawawala  
ang paghaplos,  
nagmamadali,  
pero hindi nagpapadalos  
Posible bang  
matangay,  
lumiyab,  
at lumutang  
nang sabay sabay?

Higpitan ang kapit  
 sa dumarating  
 na apoy,  
 agos,  
 at liwanag,  
 hatid ng pagsasama,

magkabuklod  
 na dinarating ang  
                     pag alpas

Sa paglubog ng buwan  
 bakas sa mukha ang  
 kuntento

ngunit

aking masid  
 ang bahid,  
 takot na mula  
 sa mga kuda  
 ng mga bumubulong  
 "pagsasala"

Mahal,  
 ipahinga  
 ang mapupungay mong mga mata  
 pawin  
 ang napaos na boses  
 'pagkat bukas sa pagmulat iparirinig  
 ang himig ng  
 pagmamahalang mapagpalaya.

# *Puno't dulo*

KAL IEN CALMA

Ito lamang ang pag ibig na kilala ko

Gumuguhit

bumabakat

nagmamarka

Tumatangis

nagdurugo

nagnanana

Masakit ngunit nagtatagal

Alam ko ang lalim

alam ko ang sidhi

*nakaukit ito sa akin*

Nagtatagal kahit masakit





Alam ko dahil naroon ako  
 Sa mga unang sulyap  
 Sa mga pagpili ng pangarap at pangako  
 Sa mga sandaling naging totooan na ang mga paglalaro

Alam ko dahil naroon ako  
 Sa gitna ng silakbo  
 Sa gitna ng mga banta ng paglisan  
 Sa gitna ng pagbitaw at pilit na pagtangan

Kaya't nang dumating kang may bitbit na itak  
 Alam ko  
 handa akong tusin ang bawat paglapat ng talim nito sa aking katawan  
 naniniwalang ang bawat tutulong dakta ay takda ng tunay na pagsinta

Noong umagang iyon,  
 Ang paghalik ng liwanag sa karimlan ang huli kong nasaksihan

Noong umagang iyon,  
*Nagluluksa ang pag ibig na 'di na mapapatahan*

# *Hinagpis*

NOA

May krot na kakabit ang aking bawat paghunga  
Paraguradong hindi lagnat dahil nanlalamig ang mga kalamnan  
Di rin trangkaso sapagkat nananatili ang lakas sa bawat yapak  
Hindi matagpuan ang puno't dulo  
Hindi mamapa ang sakit  
Dahil walang sugat, walang pasa  
Walang bakas

Bawat sampal sa kumpiyansa  
 Bawat tudla sa dignidad  
 Bawat latay sa pagkatao  
 Ng mga salitang kumakalabit, humahampas  
 Mga haplos sa sumusunggab, sumasakal  
 At mga titig na nanlilisik, nagmamatyag  
 Habang nanahimik sa isang tabi,  
 Nagtatago't nabubulok sa kasuluk sulokan ng diwa

Saan magsisimula ang paghulom?  
 Gayong walang nakabukang hiwa  
 Kung saan dadaloy ang matingkad na pula  
 Walang langib na tutubo at mangangati  
 Bago masilayan ang pilat ng pinag daanan  
 Paano lilinisin, pagagalingin?  
 Kung ang sakit ay nakaukit  
 Sa aking alaala

May krot na kakabit ang aking bawat paghunga  
 Tumutibok at kumukumpas sabay ng lansakan  
 Marahil paalala ng paglagpas  
 Ang kapalit na bigat ng pagpapatuloy  
 Isang masugid na kasama  
 Kaanib at kaisa sa pag aalsa  
 Tungo sa pagkamit ng tunay na hustisya  
 Dahil malabo man ang paghulom  
 May rebolusyon  
 May paghuhukom

# Gulong

Clarity Fantastica

Isang malaking biyaya ang magkaroon ng pwesto rito malapit sa terminal ng bus. Maraming mga pasahero at ibig sabihin ay marami rin ang kita ng aming karinderya.

Minsan nakakahulo man panoorin ang bawat gulong ng mga sasakyang dumarating saka umaalis, ay nakasanayan ko na rin lalo na parte ito ng aking trabaho.

Gulong Parang buhay 'yan nating mga tao, pakot ikot at patuloy na tinatahak ang daan.

"Isa na lang! Aalis na ang bus!" malakas na sigaw ko para marinig ng mga taong nandito ngayon, naghihintay ng kanilang masasakyan.

Nang may babaeng umakyat na sa bus ay hudyat na maaari ko na puntahan ang aking pamangkin para tulungan siya sa pagluluto. Iyon kasi ay panlima ko ng taya ngayong umaga.

Pagdating sa karinderya agad ko naabutan ang aking nag-uisang kamag-anak na may kausap, isang bagay na bihira nuya gawin sa mga taong hindi kilala. Nakakunot noo ito at tila naimis sa lalaking nasa harap nuya habang nagbabalot ng mga ulam.

"Hiya," tawag ko, sabay pasok sa pinto ng malut namung pwesto.

Lumiwanag ang kanyang mukha nang makita ako. "Tiyo Manuel!" Lumapit siya sa akin saka marahan akong hinula sa kusina kaya bigla akong nagtaka.

"Bakit?" tanong ko agad sa kanya. Ako ang nagpalaki sa batang ito kaya kilala ko ang bawat kilos niya, tinuring ko siyang tunay na anak simula noong pumanaw ang kanyang ama.

"Ang kulit ng lalaking kumakain diyan sa labas!" asik niya. "Karuna ka pa hinahanap."

"Sige na. Ako na ang bahala dito. Pumasok ka na sa klase," sabi ko at binugyan siya ng baon na agad niya namung tinanggihan.

"May ipon pa ako, Tiyo Manuel," binigyan nuya ako ng matamis na ngiting nagpapaalala sa akin sa kanyang mga magulang

Paglabas nuya ay hundi ko na napigilan ang sarili na lumapit sa lalaki. "Sino ka at ano ang kailangan mo sa akin?" Matalim ko siyang tiningnan.

Kung masama siyang tao ay handa ang aking kutsilyo na nakatago sa aking likuran.

"Sabi ho ng mga tambay sa kanto ay marunong kayo mag ayos ng sasakyan. Magpapatulong sana ako dahil nasira ang aking mga gulong," deretsong sabi naman ng binatilyo. Marahil ay ilang taon lang ang agwat rila ng aking pamangkin.

Tinutigan ko muna ito at pinakiramdaman kung nagsasabi ng totoo. Mukhang nabasa nuya ang naisip ko saka bahagyang tumawa at tinaas ang parehong mga kamay.

"Huwag kayong mag-alala, Tiyo Manuel. Wala ho akong masamang balak kaya kung maaari ay ibaba nuyo na ho ang kutsilyo na nasa likod ninyo," aniya na ikinagulat ko.

Paano niya nalaman iyon?

"Kailangan ko lang talaga ng tulong ninyo."

Nakumbinsi naman niya ako kaya sinamahan ko na lang siya patungo sa kanyang sasakyan. Pansamantala kong iniwan ang karinderya sa isa sa mga barker o kong kaibigan na aking pinagkakatiwalaan.

Sinuri ko kung ano ang problem ng kanyang sasakyan. Iyon pala ay may isang matalim na bagay na nakatusok sa dalawa nuyang gulong.

"Mayroon ka bang pampalit, hjo?" tanong ko sa binatilyo.

Kinuha nuya naman agad ang kailangan ko kaya agad akong nakapagsimula sa pagkukumpuni. Habang nagpapalit ng gulong ay hundi nito maiwasang dumaldal.

Kaya pala narinis sa kanya ang pamangkin ko masyadong maingay.

Napansin ko rin na may kalumaan na ang kanyang kotse. "Wala ka bang balak palitaan ito?"

"Wala akong pera. At saka maayos pa naman ho ang sasakyan. Gaya ng gulong, papalitan ko lang siya kapag nasira na at tuluyan ko ng hindi magagamit." Sa unang pagkakataon ay nagging seryoso ang kanyang pananalita.

"Ngunit kung ikukumpara rin sa gulong, kapag luma na ay kailangan mo na palitan dahil baka magdulot lamang ito ng aksidente," sabi ko naman sa binata "Isang importanteng bahagi ng sasakyan ang gulong, tandaan mo 'yan. Kung wala ito ay hindi ka makakarating sa iyong kinaroroonan."

"Sa kanya pa talaga nanggaling," sarkastikong bulong nito sa sarili pero malinaw ko naman na narinig

Gusto ko pa sana usisain ang kanyang sinabi pero tapos ko na ang pag aayos ng kanyang kotse. Tumayo ako saka humingi ng perang pambayad.

"Base sa'yong suot ay mayaman ka naman kaya sisingilin kita," inulahad ko ang aking palad, naghihintay na bigyan niya ng pera.

"Pasensya na, pero wala akong dalang pambayad sa'yo," inilagay nito ang mga kamay niya sa magkabilang bulsa ng kanyang pantalon. "Kung gusto ninyo sumama kayo sa akin. Kukuha ako ng pera sa banko."

Sa hindi malamang dahilan ay sumama ako sa kanya. Ang binatilyong ito ang siyang nagmaneho para saming dalawa.

Naramdaman ko na tila nagbago ang ihap ng hangin sa loob ng sasakyan dahil sa katahumakang bumabalot nito. At ang binatilyong kasama ko ay tila nagtutimpi ng galit.

"Ano ang iyong problema sa buhay at ngayon mukhang gusto mo magwala sa gitna ng kalsada?" bumaling ako sa binate, naimis na sa kanyang kilos.

"Gaya ng gulong, umukot rin ang mga bagay sa ating buhay, Tiyo Manuel. Hindi araw araw naghuhurap kayo. Kagaya kanina kayo ay masaya kasama niya. Maswerte ka dahil nandiyan ang iyong pamangkin para samahan ka pero anong ginawa mo?"

Humugpit ang kanyang hawak sa manibela at bumilis ang pagpapatakbo ng sasakyan. Tumahim ang kanyang tingin, deretsong nakatutok sa daan.

"Hindi kita maintindihan," napakapit ako sa upuan at pabalik-balik ang tingin sa kalsada. Bigla akong nakaramdam ng kakaibang kaba.

"Ibinulin ko siya samyo dahil akala ko matatagalan bago kami magkita ulit pero labin walong taon pa lamang ang nakalilipas ay nandito na naman ako," inis na sabi ng binatilyo sa akin. "Kung pinalitan mo lang sana ang mga gulong! Alam mong may nakatusok na pako pero pinilit mo pa rin ganutin!"

"Nababaliw ka na ba, hiyo? Hindi kita kilala at huwag mo akong pagsasalitaan ng ganyan!" Ako ay hindi na natutuwa sa kanyang pinagsasabi. Napansin ko na iba ang ruta na aming dinadaan. "Saan tayo pupunta?"

"Sa pamangkin mo," malamig nitong tugon sa akin.

"Sa kanya pa talaga nanggaling," sarkastikong bulong nito sa sarili pero malinaw ko naman na narinig

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"Ibinilin ko siya sainyo dahil akala ko matatagalan bago kami magkita ulit pero labin walong taon pa lamang ang nakalilipas ay nandito na naman ako," mis na sabi ng binatilyo sa akin. "Kung pinalitan mo lang sana ang mga gulong! Alam mong may nakatusok na pako pero pinilit mo pa rin gamitin!"

"Nababalih ka na ba, hijo? Hindi kita kilala at huwag mo akong pagsasalitaan ng ganyan!" Ako ay hindi na natutuwa sa kanyang pinagsasabi. Napansin ko na iba ang ruta na amung dinadaan. "Saan tayo pupunta?"

"Sa pamangkin mo," malamig nitong tugon sa akin.

Hey, hey! the body is not saved! didn't they tell us that? The popular saying goes, "save your soul!" Standard procedure states "Don't touch the dead body!" The soul's destiny is saving. The body's headed to ruin. (So early they treat us as tainted.) Whom do they wear those gloves for? Para sa bangkay ba talaga?

We are not taught to wear clothes for our body. No. We're taught to wear clothes for what will be thought of our soul. Nakikita raw ang budhi!

## THE IRONY

Exhausted, anxious, and insecure of the future, I physically feel the excruciating imbalance.

If my body could enunciate it would scream an uproarious

**UNFAIR! UNFAIR!!! UNFAIR!!!!!! SO MUCH HAS BEEN DEPRIVED OF MY BODY I KNOW IF WE WERE ALL JUST SOULS IT WOULD NOT BE THIS WAY!!!!**

**UNFAIRRRRRRR!!!!!!!!!!!!**

The line made is red. We've drawn it so finely, exclusive to soul well-being. Body!! Body!! *in a deep, deep cry*. So much injustice done to our bodies!!

I wonder where this reluctance to face or acknowledge materiality started. Or more clearly, this utter disregard for the materiality of the majority. It came from a sick upper place, so high they can stomach ignoring the physical. But not from heaven. No one is sick there. Heaven here on earth, maybe. Heaven for whom? WHY HAVE THEY MADE HEAVEN'S GATES SO HIGH DOWN HERE???

Tell me why bodies have an expiration date, meant to be left behind.

Of the many typhoons that have laid waste to our land, and the endless more to be expected, the government might just start to adequately prepare for them. Finally, relegate just resources to mitigate their onslaught, if sufficient proof is shown that flood reaches the soul. Eh kaso hindi raw nababasa ang kaluluwa.

Baka sabihin pa ng ibang lider na mga salita ang pagkain ng kaluluwa. Pero pano naman ang katawan? Tandaan!



Ang katawan ang binuhay muli.

I think about religious leaders that take the money meant for OUR bodily sustenance in order to "save our souls" Kung ganun, mas kaya pa ata masalba ang kaluluwa ng 500 pesos kaysa magkaroon ng handa sa pasko Yung 10k na kasya raw buhayin ang isang pamilya mas posible pang panalba

They tell us, don't listen to the body! It is sinful. "Join us in not listening to your bodies!" For a thing that "should be ignored" they have soulless laws they deem must be imposed on us Sa akin lang nakasalalay ang kahuhinatnan ng kaluluwa ko, pero ang katawan ko'y hindi lang akin?

?????

Come to think of it, our Filipino ancestors had this tied nature of soul and body (and thus materiality) in the bag in their living of "ginhawa" Savage corrupt, soul/body illiterate colonizers forced themselves on us claiming that they had access to soul/punty Thus, they forced our bodies to kneel They say our bodies were made in their God's likeness, but kill us Hanggang ngayon.

From earthly heaven, the chattering of the high and mighty resound The gates are too high They want it higher! Their souls claim that the palace is their birthright!" Ignoring us must be made more definite for their souls!

But these are OUR bodies that have been raised HERE And they shall see a flood that reaches heaven. A flood that reaches soul Baha na tatangayin lahat pati ang kaluluwa

*ni*

Fels Bonifacio



# 3<sup>o</sup>dies

the anatomy

3

Three concepts of the word body

- of a persona
- of a group
- of a message

0

"o" our body as proof of a unified, complex, whole

Three aspects of the self

- physical
- mental
- spiritual

Three languages used

- Filipino
- English
- Hiligaynon

3 *dies*

Three accounts of death

3<sup>o</sup>dies

BODIES





The UPLB Writers' Club is a non-profit organization of young writers and literature enthusiasts based in University of the Philippines, Los Baños. Founded in the 1970s, the organization has since then marshalled its efforts to promote meaningful and socially relevant literature inside and outside the university.

